

Day 56

by Flamingo Bubbles

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Summary: "Day 56: Today I'm going to take care of the laundry I've been putting off...and most importantly, he's still here". Chizuru can't help but watch him carefully. She knows every day together could be their last and it's tearing her apart. Post-Heisuke's Route.

Day 56

****A/N: ****I have a few things to note before this story.

First, I've never watched the anime; I've only ever played Hakuoki: Demon of the Fleeting Blossom for the PSP. For that reason, all terminology used will be whatever the translators of the game used.

Second, from my understanding, the anime basically follows Hijikata's path from the game. Well, this story is set post-Heisuke's path, so some things mentioned definitely aren't going to match up with events in the anime. I apologize for any confusion this may cause.

With those two things aside, I just have to say that Heisuke is my favorite character from this game/anime and I just felt like writing up a little story about life after the end of the game. I suppose you could view it as an alternative epilogue thing for Heisuke. Also, I haven't written anything in a while, so this may not be my best writing...and I wrote it in 1st person perspective, which I'm not very comfortable in.

All my comments aside, I'm sorry this author's note is so long, and I hope you enjoy!

* * *

><p>Day 56

_ The weather is warm today and it's the perfect day for doing the laundry; after all, I haven't had an opportunity these past few weeks. That's not entirely true. It's not as if I haven't had time, I guess I just haven't had the motivation or energy. However, I plan on changing that all today. For that reason I don't really have much time to continue this journal entry. I suppose this will be the only comment for today._

_ - Chizuru Yukimura_

_ He's still here_

As I finished up the last stroke of my journal entry, I closed it with a sigh. I knew it was a rather foolish venture to keep a journal " after all, I lived out in the countryside, far from prying eyes, so it wasn't as if anything exciting ever happened to me. But I had been keeping this journal since I first moved out here and it had become habit.

Although I knew the deeper reason I kept it was that it helped me confirm something.

It let me know that he was still there, that he hadn't disappeared and left me alone.

For that reason, I clung to the journal like a starving man clings desperately to any food he can find.

After all, he was one of the first ones to drink the Water of Life and he had fought using his Fury powers many times. While it was true that living in the countryside had managed to largely contain the bloodlust and it eventually came to the point where he could stay awake during the day with only an occasional nap, both of us had no illusions about the future.

He should have died that night at Aburano Koji; he was living on borrowed time.

I shook my head vehemently to dislodge the dark thought and began to flip absentmindedly through the pages of my journal " anything to chase the darkness from my mind.

My eyes traced over the words I had written during the many days. Most of the entries were short, detailing simple facts about the day or small, warm things I wanted to remember. However, at the bottom of each entry below my signature, there was one line. I had written it so many times that even now when I close my eyes I can see the characters ingrained in the back of my eyelids.

Those same, reassuring words, over and over and over again.

He's still here

He's still here

"He's still here."

The words slipped out from the pages of the book and into the air. Somehow, hearing them aloud comforted me even more than writing them.

With a renewed sense of reassurance, I closed the journal and quickly stored it away in the special place I have set aside for it. As soon as the journal was safely stored, I stood and began to gather some of the laundry that I had left scattered about the room when I paused to write in my journal.

The past few days, I had been keeping a close eye on him. The two of us were settling into our life in the countryside and life was beginning to wind down. However, I found that since there were no immediate problems to worry about, I couldn't help but worry about the future. Every time I saw him, I wondered just how much time the two of us still had together.

Actually, I realized, wasn't he supposed to be helping me? I knew I had sent him outside to hang some of the laundry out to dry, but that was quite some time ago. By all accounts, he should have been back by that point. I felt a prick of panic and doubt as I hurriedly gathered the rest of the laundry and made my way to the back of the house where I had sent him to hang the laundry.

"He's still here, he's still here!" I mumbled over and over again; a mantra to keep me going as the restrictive feeling of panic within my chest began to choke me. His life force couldn't have been used up that quickly, right? The two of us still had so much time ahead of us!

By the time I reached the corner of the house, my steps were practically at a break-neck pace.

"Heisuke!" I called as I rounded the corner, my concerns finally working themselves into one desperate call of his name. I stood there looking out at the yard that surrounded our house as I attempted to catch my breath. Some of the laundry was hung up and gently flapping in the breeze, but Heisuke was nowhere to be seen.

He hadn't responded to my call.

The worry and anxiety of all the past days crashed down upon me. Had my fears finally come true? I stood frozen for a second and time seemed to stop as I closed my eyes and saw the phrase that had been my pillar for so long.

He's still here.

In that moment, the words seem frail "it was as if they could break at the slightest prodding, the gentlest bump. I snapped my eyes opened so I wouldn't be forced to look at them any longer.

Fear drowned out all rational thought as I threw down the laundry I was carrying and began to search hurriedly amongst the lines of laundry for some trace of him. I knew that he could have disappeared at any moment, but why couldn't I have been there for him? Had he known for some time but chosen not to tell me so I wouldn't worry? Why did he have to die alone?

Would I would I truly never see him again?

Would I never again see that smile that I've come to love so much?

Panic choking my every motion and tears springing to my eyes, I rounded one more corner in the maze of laundry and felt my previously erratic heart stop dead in my chest. My breath came in shallow gasps as I took a few, cautious steps forward " I was terrified that if I walked too quickly, the illusion before me would shatter.

I saw Heisuke lying in the grass, a sheet bunched together and placed under his head to serve as a pillow. His breathing was slow but steady and his mouth hung opening, making him appear slightly childish as he slept in the afternoon sunlight. I took the last few hesitant steps until I was standing right next to him; he didn't stir, his steady breathing continued on unabated.

A wave of relief washed over me and I released a breath I hadn't realized I was holding as the strength rushed from my legs. I fell to the ground with a soft thud and I felt my pent up tears begin to stream down my face.

He was still here, he was alright, he hadn't turned into ash and left me alone. I covered my face with my hands as I attempted to stop the tears from falling, but I was just so relieved that nothing I did could stem the tears. I hiccupped softly to myself as I tried vainly once more to wipe my tears away.

"Chizuru?"

The sound of his voice, although still slightly muffled with the sound of one who had just woken, was instantly recognizable and caused my heart to jump into my throat. Hearing him say my name only made the tears run faster down my face.

How many more times would I be allowed the luxury of hearing him say my name?

"Chizuru," He said, stating my name once more and causing me to hiccup slightly, "H-Hey, what's wrong? Why are you crying?"

I felt his hands on my shoulders, but all I could do was shake my head in response and mutter a few incomprehensible words. I wanted to tell him that everything was alright " everything was alright now that I knew he was still there. However, any words I wanted to say were blocked by the stream of tears that fell down my face.

Suddenly, Heisuke took me in his arms and began to gently rub my back as I sobbed and hiccupped quietly into his shoulder. As my tears slowly stopped, I listened to the sound of Heisuke's heart beating " the proof that he was still alive " and I couldn't help but think of that first kiss we had shared so long ago.

Back then, he had told me that he would go crazy if I wasn't there for him. I realized that I felt exactly the same. If he ever left me, I wouldn't know how to continue on with my life; I would be utterly lost.

That's why it just wasn't fair. He could disappear at any moment " he wouldn't even be given the opportunity to die like a normal human; he would simply turn to ash and be gone. As my tears stopped completely, I wrapped my arms around him and held him tightly, confirming that he was still there; that he was still real.

I didn't want him to go. I didn't want him to die.

"Please Heisuke," I mumbled into his shoulder, my voice barely above a whisper, "Don't ever scare me like that again. Please justâ€¦don't leave meâ€¦everâ€¦"

He was silent for a moment before he raised his hand to his hair and gently began to stroke my hair. When he spoke, his voice was low and gentle, as if he knew what he was about to say would be difficult to hear, but essential.

"You know I can't make a promise like that Chizuru. I'm a monster; one day I'm going to disappear and be gone."

"But!-"

"But," He continued, silencing my protests, "I promise that I will always love you. Even after the two of us have died, I'll continue to love you. Forever and ever."

With each word he spoke, I felt the weight on my heart lighten just a little bit. I already knew everything Heisuke was saying to be true â€" he had told me these same words many times before â€" but hearing him say them again always managed to sooth my worries.

One day he would be gone, but his love never would.

The two of us sat there in a silent embrace for what felt like an eternity as he continued to gently stroke my hair and I listened to the sound of his heartbeat. With his arms wrapped around me, I knew everything would be alright.

Eventually, I gave a tiny nod into his chest and he gave me one more tight squeeze before he released me from his embrace. As the two of us separated, he gave me a warm and endearing smile that I returned as best I could.

"Don't worry Chizuru," He stated again, "There's no reason for you to cry, alright?"

I nodded and allowed my eyes to trace every contour of his body. I didn't ever want to forget the man I love. As my eyes reached the top of my head, I couldn't help but giggle.

"W-What is it now?" I heard Heisuke ask as his smile faded into a face of confusion as the serious nature of the moment dissipated away into lightheartedness, "Why are you laughing?"

"Y-Your hair," I managed between my giggles. I knew I probably shouldn't have laughed at his expense, but I couldn't help myself; knowing that he was still there made me feel like I was walking on air.

His hands shot to his head as he attempted to smooth down his hair that was still sticking up at odd angles, tussled from the nap he had just taken. I couldn't help but giggle again at the futility of his endeavor.

"It's not working Chizuru," He complained even as a smile tugged at

the corners of his mouth.

"No, it's not," I confirmed as I managed to restrain my giggles, "But that's what you get for napping when you're supposed to be working."

And for making me worry, I added mentally.

"I can't help it. The sun just makes me sleepy and the sheet looked like it would make a great pillow."

"Is that so?" I asked, a streak of mischievousness working its way into my system. I quickly stood up and ran over to where the sheet lay. With another giggle, I fell to the ground and used the sheet as a pillow.

"Hey, that's not fair!" I heard Heisuke complain from behind me, "That was my idea!"

"And now I've stolen your idea. Think of it as punishment. I get to take a nap while you do all the laundry," I said as I laughed and buried my face into the sheet.

My laughter was cut short as I felt arms wrap around me and a warm breath on the back of my neck. My face heated slightly as my heart leapt into my throat.

"Heisuke?" I managed as I attempted to turn around and look at his face. Unfortunately, from my current position, it was impossible for me. With a mildly exasperated sigh, I snuggled down into his embrace as a smile worked its way on to my face. In my head, I decided that the laundry could wait for another day.

"I love you" Heisuke mumbled quietly in my ear, sending shivers running up and down my spine. I was about to respond when his breathing began to slow and I realized that he had fallen asleep again.

"I'll let you know how I feel when you wake up," I said softly as I listened to his heartbeat once more.

"After all, you're still here and you're not going anywhere, right?"

Although he gave no response, his grip around me seemed to tighten slightly and I smiled to myself as I felt my own eyelids grow heavy. Just before sleep claimed me, I decided that I wouldn't need to keep my journal "there wasn't a reason to any more."

He was still there and he always would be.

* * *

><p>AN: **As a side note, I always though Heisuke and Souji had very similar endings in the game. Any who, I hope you guys enjoyed! Let me know what you think! Who knows; if enough people are interested I might do extended epilogues for other characters.

End

file.